
OVERVIEW OF ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

Work Programme

2. We have reviewed and revised our work programme to enable us to adopt a more focussed approach to scrutinising each of our topic areas aligning each of them to the eight outcomes and three conditions of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the relevant performance indicators from the Performance Management Framework.
3. By undertaking this review it is expected that we will be able to provide a more rigorous and informed challenge to the areas of discussion and provide more effective scrutiny of the services within our remit.
4. In addition, we have also held a separate session with Officers to look at the revised performance management framework for adult social care.
5. A number of Members of our Scrutiny Committee have also attended some of the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) training sessions which have been held in relation to safeguarding children and some of the principles from this training will be adopted across our work in adults safeguarding.

Dementia Review

6. Our review of dementia services is on-going and we have had a number of meetings outside of the main Scrutiny Committee meetings to look at the dementia pathway and the support and advice services in Darlington. To date, we have obtained information from Council officers and external partners such as the Director of Public Health, the Development and Commissioning Manager, the NHS Commissioning Support Unit, the Dementia Nurse Specialist from the Darlington Memorial Hospital and the Independent Chair of the Darlington Adults Safeguarding Board. We have also undertaken site visits to various locations providing advice services and to see the places where people living with Dementia are treated and/or cared for in the Borough and have researched a wide range of documents and background material.
7. Nine Members of the Review Group have participated in a Dementia Friends Information Session and a number of those Members have also gone on to undertake Dementia Friends Champion training. A Dementia Friends Champion is a volunteer who encourages others to make a positive difference to people living with dementia in their community. They are also able to run the Friends sessions

to inspire other people to become Dementia Friends and help to create dementia friendly communities. More information about becoming a Dementia Friend can be obtained from the Alzheimers Society website www.dementiafriends.org.uk

8. This work is an in-depth piece of work and we still have quite a lot of work to undertake, however, it is hoped that the review will be concluded by May 2016.

Rosemary Court

9. As part of the above work, we have visited Rosemary Court Extra Housing Scheme to learn more about the housing and telecare offer for the residents of Darlington. Rosemary Court was developed in partnership with Hanover Housing and is one of four Extra Care Schemes in Darlington and provides 42 self-contained flats with on-site care by Making Space.
10. The properties are let to applicants aged 50 and above, with both a housing and care need. Whilst the original intention was that 14 of these flats would be for tenants with dementia, many more of the tenants have dementia along with other health needs. There is a broad age range of tenants from age 50 to late 90's.
11. Rosemary Court is designed, furnished and decorated to ensure that people with dementia and a wide range of other health needs and disabilities can live independently with the appropriate care and support. Each flat has level access showers, and the tele-care overlay to allow additional support if this is required. Within Rosemary Court there is a room that has been replicated as a flat and this has many of the devices available within our telecare offer. We were able to see a live demonstration of this and saw how the devices were used to promote health, wellbeing and independence for the person and the carer. As well as achieving this, many of the devices allow the person to have a reduced need for care and we were given some examples of case history to demonstrate this.
12. We were given information about the current projects that are happening within the field of Telecare. The RIACT project enables Social Workers to access the most suitable equipment for the person dependent on their needs at the time of assessment which would usually happen on discharge from hospital or a care environment. The equipment is then installed for a six week period free of charge which gives any new user the opportunity to use the equipment and get a better idea of how it can benefit them in their everyday living.
13. It is intended that further visits to housing schemes will be undertaken and more detailed scrutiny of the telecare/telehealth offer will be undertaken with the Health and Partnership Scrutiny Committee.

Housing Services

14. Some of our Members attended the members training session in respect of Housing Services. The session proved very successful with good attendance rates and positive feedback and was particularly helpful for new Members on our Scrutiny Committee. Various housing officers were available to provide briefings on

a 1-1 basis and at ward level on the following issues :-

- (a) Lifeline Services and Assistive Technology;
- (b) Housing Options;
- (c) Asset Management;
- (d) Housing Management, including Housing Plus and Furnished Tenancies;
- (e) Customer Engagement; and
- (f) Income Management

Scrutiny and the Medium-Term Financial Plan

15. As with all other Scrutiny Committees, we will be holding special meetings over the next couple of months to look at the proposals within the Medium-Term Financial Plan which are under the remit of our Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Sue Richmond
Chair of Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee